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The Danger at Our Doors

WHEN politicians fail us, our hope rests in the man held under our system to responsibility for the public health and vested with the "autocratic" authority that alone enables him to get action. Just now while the Senate of the United States, influenced by a powerful international Jewish cabal—bent on flooding the country with immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe utterly regardless of the health and welfare of the American people—is fiddling over the immigration restriction bill sent to it by the House several weeks ago, the plague has been seeping into the country.

Aroused by the menace, Dr. Royal S. Copeland, New York's health commissioner, is sounding an alarm that should wake up even the sleepy Senate and show the people how exigent is the measure enacted by an overwhelming majority in the popular branch of the national legislature. Dr. Copeland declares that the greatest menace confronting the United States today is the possibility of a typhus plague. So great is the danger, he says, that it can only be averted by immediate and co-operative action on the part of Federal, state and port authorities to combat the influx of immigrants from the typhus-infected regions of Europe.

That should simplify the issue for the Senators. Do they wish to be held responsible for exposing the whole country to a plague of the most dangerous communicable disease known next to the bubonic plague, and beside which our recent influenza epidemics with all their terrible toll of human life would be as nothing?

Keep Them Busy

IT HAS often occurred to the thoughtful onlooker in our police courts that, when boys or girls are brought up for sentence, it is the parents of the young criminal, rather than the child himself, that should be punished. In many cases, the causal relation of parental neglect to the child's criminality is obvious enough. Just now the whole problem of the child in his relation to the home, the state and the school is coming up for live discussion. The facts that arouse public attention are startling enough. We are told that teachers everywhere are complaining that school work is slighted because the children frequent the motion picture theaters, the dance halls and the pool rooms. Physicians and nurses declare that low health conditions prevail among school children to an alarming degree. Juvenile courts report earlier delinquencies and increasingly frequent and serious lawlessness among the young people. Newspapers print reports of juvenile holdups and burglaries almost daily.

Alma L. Binzell, professor of child training at the University of Minnesota, suggests that neither the children nor their parents are chiefly to blame for this state of things. The fault, she says, lies with the state, in its failure to give to parents and prospective parents the training that would make child rearing in the home an intelligent and successful process.

Is it not possible that the learned pedagogues are overlooking some rather elemental considerations in this whole matter? Some 30 years ago, Charles Pratt, a pioneer Standard Oil millionaire and a very practical and successful business man, devoted years of careful thought and thorough investigation to the problem of how he could spend his money to greatest advantage. He came, somewhat sadly, to the conclusion that very little could be done for grown-ups, compared with the immense possibilities of child training. So he established the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn for the simultaneous training of hand, heart and head in

skilled trades and handicrafts. A little later, a Philadelphia millionaire, under the sage advice of Dr. C. R. Henderson, an educator who will rank among such daring and illumined pioneers as Froebel, Pestalozzi, Horace Mann and Montessori, started the Drexel Institute on much the same lines. The late Elbert Hubbard did good work in his own little industrial community in an endeavor to demonstrate the all-round benefits of combining thinking and working, learning and earning. In each of these instances it was proved that if we keep the minds and the hands together interested and busy in useful and beautiful creation, the wholesome and enjoyable activities of the rightly-directed school-shop need not fear any competition from the unwholesome and inane schools of crime and degeneracy into which the "movie" is so often degraded.

Why Russia Starves

THERE is one paragraph in the recent letter of Under-Secretary of State Davis to Alton B. Parker that is especially enlightening as to Bolshevik methods. The letter was an answer to certain charges publicly made by the League of Free Nations Association to the effect that the United States Government is maintaining a blockade of American trade with Russia, even to the extent of preventing shipments of soap and medical supplies.

Mr. Davis declares specifically, "There is no restriction on the export to Russia of medical supplies, soap and the common necessities of life." He further adds that the only restriction maintained by this government on export trade with Soviet Russia is the restriction on the export of munitions or commodities susceptible of immediate military use, special export licenses being required for the shipment of commodities coming under this classification.

Then how about the "food and medicine blockade" in regard to which the Bolsheviks and their British and American sympathizers have been making so much noise?

Mr. Davis tells us: "The Department of State has taken an intense and continual interest in the possibility of arranging for large scale relief work by strong and reputable organizations. The difficulties which have stood in the way of accomplishments in this matter have been raised not by this government, but by the Soviets, who cannot find in their theory of communism any excuse for private philanthropy . . . The only relief work which the Soviets will tolerate is the direct gift of supplies to the Soviet Government, to be distributed by them as their own largesse . . . The official obstruction to the feeding of sick Russian children by Americans has come not from this government, but from the Soviets."

Plainly, the Moscow Autocracy has no qualms about letting Russian children by the thousands sicken and die for lack of food and medicine, rather than allow them to be saved through the benevolence of American "bourgeoisie." Herod repeats himself!

Vulcan Proclaims Peace

IT LOOKS as if Vulcan was at last demanding a new and bigger job than the forging of sword and breastplate. If ours is the age of steel, as has often been suggested, may it not be that following the fifty-one month era in which the world gave itself to beating its plowshares into cannon and its pruning hooks into rifle barrels and machine-guns (to the heart-rending grief and impoverishment of humanity), we shall witness a reversal of the process with some approach to the fulfillment of ancient prophecy?

This thought is surely encouraged by a recent utterance of a great Japanese iron master, professor of mining and metallurgy in the Imperial University of Tokyo and expert adviser for the South Manchuria railways, the Viscount Incuye. He is visiting this country to study conditions in the American steel industry and incidentally to purchase about a million dollars' worth of steel-working machinery. Says Viscount Incuye: "War talk in either Japan or the United States is utterly unreasonable and stupid. I have every confidence that whatever matters are still at issue between the two countries will be settled on a common-sense basis. Among thinking men in either country, only the most friendly relations are desired."

The devotion of our forges and foundries the world over to the production of steel for railways and bridges, machinery and agricultural implements, bridges and structural beams and crosspieces must certainly make for a nobler humanity and a truly richer and happier world. The madness of diverting national energies and national wealth to mutual slaughter and destruction has surely had its day. "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning!"

Domestic Disarmament

DISCUSSION of international disarmament may be more or less academic and remote. The alarming frequency, in all our great cities, of murder by shooting incidental to robbery is sharp reminder that the question of disarming the thug is one of very practical and pressing importance. Disarmament may well, like charity, begin at home. It might thus prove an actual beginning of the ardently-hoped-for world-wide laying down of arms.

Stringent laws are in force in regard to the sale of poisons. Why should we not have even more stringent laws against the sale of revolvers? Thousands, perhaps millions, of revolvers were thrown on the market with the demobilization of our army. Many demobilized men retained this item of equipment. It is certainly not at all difficult to obtain one. The revolver is a "deadly weapon." Its one purpose is the taking of human life. To permit promiscuous possession of this arm is to permit promiscuous killing. It should be made impossible for any one to obtain a revolver except for purposes of police protection or self-defence.

An important part of any program of national disarmament is the taking of the whole business of the manufacture and sale of arms and munitions out of private hands, thus removing, to that degree at least, the money-making incentive from the business of human slaughter. If we really want to diminish the frequency of murder in this country, we will not be content with the infliction of a light fine for "carrying a concealed weapon." We will begin by placing the sale of deadly weapons to individuals wholly in the hands of the public authorities, preferably the local police in each town. Licenses to carry firearms should be granted only to watchmen, night workers and other persons having good reason to fear night attacks. Their applications should be indorsed by employers or other reputable citizens and verified by the police. Licenses should be absolutely denied to persons with criminal records. Licenses issued to householders for protection against burglars should not include the right to carry the weapon outside the house. Every weapon should be stamped with a number and a careful record kept. And a good stiff license fee should be charged.

Then perhaps we may be able to counteract one of the worst effects of the war in its cheapening of life and the ready "mounting of a gat" and readiness to pull it shown everywhere, even by college boys.

Blocking Reconstruction

THIS is an amazing tale of commercial greed that comes to us from France. It seems that about a year ago General George W. Goethals, the builder of the Panama Canal and first governor of the Canal Zone, submitted to the French Government a plan for Franco-American co-operation in the speedy and sorely needed reconstruction of the devastated areas. After fullest investigation, the plan received the approval of the then Premier M. Millerand, and of President Deschanel. The genius of the great American engineer, probably the world's foremost genius in construction, was deemed to have solved the stupendous problem, which seemed to be hopelessly languishing, of a restoration of these shot and shell-torn regions to the happy and profitable homing and industry of a long-afflicted population.

Now we are told that English engineering and building contractors and English financiers have brought influence to bear on the Lloyd George Government to cause a blocking of General Goethals' plan. This manifestation of trade greed and jealousy is rousing the French people to deep resentment. Only the other day, the *Lanterne* published a leading article from the pen of M. Georges Barthélemy, a prominent member of the Chamber of Deputies, strongly protesting against what he calls France's shameful economic subjection to England and threatening, in behalf of France's eight million war sufferers, to force the government to take up and carry through General Goethals' scheme.

British firms have already obtained vast contracts for the reconstruction of devastated districts in Belgium. In the very nature of things, it is likely that they would be allowed to share in the work planned under Franco-American auspices. One thing is certain, and that is that the question of profits, present or prospective, should not be allowed longer to interfere with the speedy rebuilding of the homes of the unfortunate peasants and villagers destroyed in the war. They have already been compelled to endure the hardships and misery of two winters without decent shelter since the cessation of hostilities. To force a third such winter of wretchedness and suffering upon these unhappy war victims would be a crime against humanity.